

Wrestling fans' terminology guide

By Bryan Alvarez
Pro Sports Xchange

Welcome to the Figure Four Weekly Insider Terms Booklet. I know that many of you read the newsletter and think to yourself, "What does the word 'job' mean? He always says 'job'. And what in the HELL does 'hoss' mean?"

Well, this booklet has been written to clear that stuff up for you. I'm going to list, in alphabetical order, the terms most used in the newsletter and what they really mean. Many of these terms are used in the wrestling industry and you probably have already figured out what a lot of them mean. Some of them are older terms that aren't used that much anymore and you might be a little confused when I mention them. Some are words that I have just made up over the years.

Regardless, I will do as best a definition as possible for each word and then give an example of the word being used in a sentence. Also, keep in mind that this booklet was originally written several years ago, so many of the examples may be a bit outdated. In the next few months we'll post a more current version with some new terms.

Angle: This is some sort of incident that occurs, usually in a match or shortly after, to change the direction of a storyline or give reason for a feud or turn. Example: "Scott Hall hitting Kevin Nash during that tag team match to split up the Outsiders was the stupidest angle of all time."

Blade: This is either a noun or a verb. A "blade" itself is a little piece of a razor blade wrapped in tape that is used to cut open a wrestler's forehead to make them bleed. Wrestlers usually take aspirin before a match to thin the blood and make it seem like it's flowing all over the place. Some wrestlers just don't know what they're doing and they really do bleed all over the place. Usually the cut is pretty small and not very deep. I bladed one time and it felt like cutting cardboard, but there wasn't any pain associated with it. In fact, at first I mistakenly thought that I hadn't broken the skin so I bladed a second time (this is a dumb idea). To "blade" is the act of cutting yourself open. Example: "Oh my God, Paul Bearer bladed!"

Blow up: This is when you totally run out of gas during a match and become exhausted. Example: "Warrior blew up running to the ring before the match."

Booker: This is the guy backstage that decides who's going to win or lose, what's going to happen in the match, how long it's going to last, etc. Example: "Kevin Nash is the worst booker of all time."

Bump: When you fall down in the ring you "take a bump". Example: "Hogan is the worst wrestler in the world. He even takes bumps in slow motion."

Card: The line-up of who's wrestling at an event. Example: "Sid is in the main event of tonight's card. He'll probably be involved in a career-ending car accident and not show up."

Carny: A long time ago, the language used by the wrestlers to communicate with each other was called "Carny". When guys wrestled, they spoke to each other in carny so that if someone in the audience heard them call a spot, they wouldn't know what in the hell they were really saying.

Clean House: To run everyone out of the ring. Example: "Barbarian sure cleaned house with that Kick of Fear."

Coolest Finisher in the World: The Michinoku Driver.

Draw: The ability to attract fans to a show. If a guy is popular and people will buy a ticket just to see him, he's a big draw. Example: "Goldberg vs. Hulk Hogan is the main event. That should draw."

Dud: A match that sucks. Example: "Whenever Roddy Piper is involved, we're guaranteed a dud."

Face: The good guy. Sometimes people say "babyface". Example: "Jeff Jarrett is the worst face of all time."

Fall: When a guy gets pinned, he's lost that fall. Example: "There's no such thing as a 'best' of three falls match when Kimura is involved."

Feed: To book a wrestler to job miserably to someone who is getting a major push. If a guy is going to get a title shot, several wrestlers in a row are "fed" to him to make him appear more dangerous and threatening to the Champion. Example: "They fed Hennig to Goldberg."

Feud: A series of matches between two guys or two tag teams. Example: "DOA vs. Los Boricuas was the lamest feud of all time."

Finish: Events that lead to the end of the match. Example: "Taka Michinoku hitting Brian Christopher with the Michinoku Driver was the best finish on the show, since the Michinoku Driver is the Coolest Finisher in the World."

Garbage wrestling: Matches that are built around pure violence and usually nothing else. Example: "That exploding barbed wire broken glass double-hell exploding bed of nails match was a classic garbage bout."

Gig: To blade yourself or someone else. Example: "New Jack gigged that kid way too deep."

Green: A guy who's inexperienced is green. Example: "Goldberg is so green people try to mow him."

Hardway: When you bleed and it's not the result of a blade. Example: "Sandman bled hardway after plunging a beer can repeatedly into his own forehead."

Heat: Noise from the crowd. Either positive or negative. Some people would say that only a positive crowd reaction is heat, but I say these people are dumb. Example: "Rocky drew some major heat when he said this was the Trailor Park Capital of the World."

Heel: The bad guy. Example: "Jeff Jarrett is the worst heel of all time."

Hooker: Not a term used much anymore. A long time ago there were guys called Hookers that knew crippling and debilitating holds. If a wrestler was not behaving himself, the Hooker set him straight. If there was a territorial dispute in question, the Hooker was sent in to take care of the job. Lou Thesz was one of the most famous Hookers of all time.

Hoss: When fans just go totally hog-wild for something. Example: "The crowd went hoss when the Masked Invader's head fell right off."

House: The number of people that showed up in a building. Example: "Kimala vs. Jim Duggan in that dog collar on a pole match drew the smallest house in the history of the WWF." (Note: This match did not really happen.)

House show: A wrestling show that never happened because it wasn't televised. "Benoit won the TV Title three times at house shows last week. Too bad we'll never hear about it on TV." (Note: This really did happen.)

International Object: This is what Ted Turner wants everyone to call "foreign objects". I guess "foreign" sounds bad or something.

Job: A planned loss. If the booker tells you to lose, you're going to go out there and do the job. Example: "Why doesn't Nash ever job to anybody?"

Jobber: A guy who always loses. Example: "Duane Gill is a jobber no matter what they call him."

Juice: Blood. "To juice" means to bleed. Example: "Look at all that juice coming out of Bearer's head!"

Kayfabe: No one really knows where this word came from or what the hell it really means. If you're keeping the inside workings of the business a secret, you're keeping kayfabe. If you tell everyone that it's worked, you're breaking kayfabe. If you're a wrestler and you're talking about the business, you say "kayfabe" if a fan comes up in order to warn the other wrestler to stop

talking about it. One time some friends and I were practicing outside in a ring in front of nobody else and a dog walked by. Mike Blinn screamed: "There's a dog! Kayfabe, kayfabe!"

Mark: A fan who knows nothing about the business. Marks are assumed to be morons for some reason, and many of them are. Example: "Brent Kremen is not a mark, he just acts like one at live events."

Over: If a guy is taken seriously by the fans and they react to him each and every time he appears, he's over. You can also tell if a guy is over by looking at how much merchandise he sells or how big a draw he is. Example: "Rocky is getting way over as a heel."

Paper: Free tickets given away for a show to boost attendance. Example: "That was the most heavily papered show in the history of the Outlaw Independent Wrestling Organization."

Plant: A member of the audience who is put there by the booker and interferes as part of the show. Example: "Brent Kremen should be a plant since he acts like one anyway."

Pop: When the crowd cheers loudly for something. Example: "The crowd popped huge when he hit a flying elbow onto the Masked Invader's detached head."

Post: When a wrestler gets thrown into the ringpost. Example: "He posted Savage's leg!" Push: When a wrestler goes on a major winning streak and beats everyone en route to a title shot. Example: "Chris Benoit is the most pushed jobber in history."

Run-in: When a guy not involved in a match interferes. Example: "Giant began his run-in back in 1972 and just now made it to the ring!"

Screw Job: A match that ends when somebody interferes or something happens that makes the finish less than clean. Example: "Bret Hart and Lex Luger tied in the Royal Rumble. Only WWF could find a way to book a screw-job in a battle royal." (Note: This is not true. WCW is very adept at booking screw-jobs in battle royals.)

Sell: To act like you're hurt as a result of a hold being applied. Example: "Duggan sold the Kick of Fear like his head fell off."

Shoot: When the match is real or when a guy gets pissed off in the ring and really tries to beat up his opponent. Example: "Jerry Sags was shooting when he put Scott Hall's teeth through his upper lip."

Smirk: Someone who thinks they know what they're talking about in wrestling but in reality has no clue. I'm a great example of that.

Sold Show: When a company is paid a certain amount of money in advance by a venue in order to have a show. The venue then collects ticket sales, pays for advertising, etc.

Spot: A move. Example: "That was the worst spot I ever saw in a pro match."

Squash: When one guy just kicks the other guy's ass really badly and the other guy gets no offense in. Example: "I miss Kimala squash matches."

Stable: A group of wrestlers that are involved with each other. On a professional basis. Usually. Example: "The Boricuas are a stable without a cause."

Stiff: To make contact in a rough manner. Example: "Benoit's chops are so stiff!" Turn: To go from being a good guy to a bad guy or vice versa. Example: "That Owen Hart turn made no sense at all. Why is he in the Nation of Domination now?"

Tweener: A wrestler who is a good guy and a bad guy all wrapped up in one. Example: "Steve Austin used to be a tweener but now he's a total face."

Work: The opposite of a shoot. When two guys work together to make a match look like the real thing. Example: "That fight between Severn and Rey Misterio Jr. was definitely a work!" (Note: This match never occurred. I don't think.)

Workrate: A description of a wrestler's performance level inside the ring. If he does a good job making the match believable and exciting and tries hard, he's got a good workrate. If he's lazy, untalented or his name is Jim Duggan, he's got a poor workrate. Example: "Boy, Davey Boy Smith's workrate has gone all to hell."